

## CHURCH AND STATE II

Review- Church & state are separate as institutions, yet both are established by God & thus meant to interact with one another. Government needs involvement of citizens to fulfill its God-given purpose & also avoid arrogance of power. Today our task to discuss how we Christian citizens go about this witness & responsibility

I In past, Lutherans have been pretty quiet about public affairs. But 20<sup>th</sup> century changed that.

- A. Quietism of church in Germany; witness of Bonhoeffer, et al.
- B. Civil Rights Movement in the US – M. L. King, Jr, et al.
- C. New emphases in Biblical & theological studies.
  - 1. Renewed study of OT Prophets – justice emphasis.
  - 2. Liberation theology in Latin America.
  - 3. Feminist theology in US.

II Some criteria to guide us.

- A. Our witness must be influenced by contemporary Christian teaching without trying to make the US a Christian nation.
- B. Emphasis should be on advocacy rather than lobbying.
- C. Informed by whole biblical witness, not merely proof-texts. Especially interpreted in the light of Jesus Christ.
- D. Avoid scape-goating.
  - 1. Different reactions to 9/11.
    - a. Falwell & Pat Roberts
    - b. Premier of Canada
- E. Avoid arrogance
  - 1. Test convictions with other Christians.
  - 2. Work cooperatively – Elton Trueblood

### III Issues that should concern us Christians – as suggested by Natl. Luth. Council.

#### A. Maintain Peace

1. Danger of US empire-building.
2. Power of military-industrial complex
3. Just war criteria

#### B. Establish justice

1. Current system tilted toward wealthy, whites, educated.
2. We need a restorative emphasis- wages, taxes, prison, etc.

#### C. Protect & advance human rights.

1. UN declaration of over 20 basic human rights.
2. Struggles in US over rights to education, health care, disabled, etc.

#### D. Promote the general welfare of all people.

1. Commitment to whole community is central.
2. A defining issue in US is to redress corrupting power of wealth. Only government has power to limit corporations or super –rich.

#### Conclusion:

We Lutherans stand in tradition of reform, not revolution. Luther an example. This is our God-given mandate today toward government & economic system. As a church we have been too often silent. Our voice of advocacy needed along with worship, bible study, good works. Amos 5:21-24.